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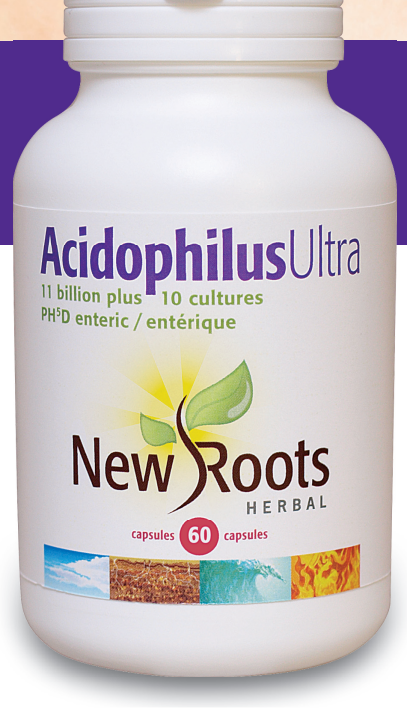

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Publisher & Senior Editor - Joseph Roberts
Managing Editor - Sonya Weir
Design & Production - Peter Sircom Bromley

Contributors:
Robert Alstead, Steve Anderson, Alan Cassels, Laura Cook, Guy Dauncey, Adrien Dilon, Carolyn Herriot, Kami Kanetsuka, Vesanto Melina, Faisal Moola, Geoff Olson, Gwen Randall-Young, Rayna Sagness, David Suzuki, Eckhart Tolle

Sales - Head office 604-733-2215
toll-free 1-800-365-8897

Contact Common Ground:
Phone: **604-733-2215**
Fax: 604-733-4415
Advertising: admin@commonground.ca
Editorial: editor@commonground.ca

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Charter for Compassion

The Charter seeks to change the conversation so that compassion becomes a key word in public and private discourse, making it clear that any ideology that breeds hatred or contempt, be it religious or secular, has failed the test of our time.

THE CHARTER for Compassion is the result of Karen Armstrong's 2008 *TED Prize wish and made possible by the generous support of the Fetzer Institute. It will be unveiled to the world on November 12.

The Golden Rule requires that we use empathy – moral imagination – to put ourselves in others' shoes. We should act toward them as we would want them to act toward us. We should refuse, under any circumstance, to carry out actions that would cause them harm.

The Charter, crafted by people all over the world and drafted by a multi-faith, multi-national council of thinkers and leaders, is a cry for a return to this central principle so often overlooked in our world. It reminds the faithful that, in the past, leading sages of all the major traditions insisted that the Golden Rule was the essence of religion, that everything else was "commentary" and that it should be practised "all day and every day." They insisted that any interpretation of scripture that led to hatred or disdain was illegitimate and that exegesis must issue in practical charity.

Like the Charter of Human Rights, this Charter for Compassion is a yardstick against which the laity as well as religious and secular leaders can measure their behaviour; it can empower congregations to demand a more compassionate teaching from pastors and preachers; it can mobilize youth, who have seen at a formative age what happens when bigotry becomes rife in a society; it can make interfaith understanding a priority; inspire exegetes, scholars, educators and the media to explore the role compassion has played in the traditions, and ensure that compassion is a focal point in the curricula of schools, colleges and seminaries.

The Charter seeks to change the conversation so that compassion becomes a key word in public and private discourse, making it clear that any ideology that breeds hatred or contempt, be it religious or secular, has failed the test of our time.

We need everybody to participate *continued p.30...*

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Drug safety and your DNA

DRUG BUST *Alan Cassels*

HEALTH

In the future, the pharmaceuticals in your medicine cabinet may be designed around your personal genetic makeup.

IT RECENTLY came to my attention that some people react badly to prescription drugs. *Really*?

Perhaps I was having a Homeresque "doh" moment when I found myself tripping over this fact as I examined the burgeoning world of Internet-based home genetic testing. If you haven't noticed, there are all kinds of helpful services on the Internet where we consumers can go online and buy personalized genetic testing kits to determine our susceptibility to a variety of diseases. These kits, costing from $300 to $500, consist of a cheek swab you take in the privacy of your own home and then send to the company for analysis. Some people use the genetic tests to satisfy their curiosity about their family history; one site boasts that a personalized test of your DNA can "… demonstrate the role your ancestors played in human history." Oh, yeah.

Using home-based gene tests can help determine maternal or paternal ancestry and no doubt it is very useful for people who need help answering that nagging question, "Gee, why is it I look so much like the mailman?"

The real money for these companies comes from selling tests that can determine the likelihood of your getting certain diseases, based on an assessment of variations in your DNA sequence. These variations, called single nucleotide polymorphisms – SNPs or "snips" – can be analyzed and linked to differences in health or physical appearance.

So, is all of this just a lot of high-tech snake oil and the world of personalized genetics just another high-tech money drain for the worried well? It's possible that people seeking answers from their genes may be wasting their money and seriously deluding themselves. When the company sends you back your personalized DNA test, there is often very little your SNPs can tell you about any unique medical traits. Nor do they provide much substantive information related to your genetic makeup in terms of how it might increase or decrease your risk of developing some kind of disease in the future.

One of the more popular online genetic testing companies is 23andMe (www.23andme.com). It is at the forefront of fulfilling that insatiable desire of some people to know everything about their past and future health. While you might be tempted to say that such sites are for suckers, tailored for people who have more money than brains, there might eventually be something of value there. While personalized genetic testing is still in its infancy, there are some very helpful potential uses on the horizon. One ray of hope lies in improving the way you take prescription drugs to treat a disease you have right now, rather than determining which diseases you might develop as you age.

Which brings me back to the fact that people can be hurt by drugs, a fact that might be altered by a fishing expedition in your own genetic pool. The point is that people react differently to drugs, sometimes dramatically differently. Wouldn't it be nice to know that, given your particular genotype, there might be a greater possibility of avoiding an adverse effect related to the drug?

Our genetic makeup, general health, body size and a whole range of other factors combine to determine our vastly different reactions to drugs. Our ability to predict the effects of drugs in any particular individual is pretty weak – a drug that works fine in one person may provoke a massive reaction in another – so we need constant reminding that taking any particular drug is essentially an experiment. The question then becomes can a genetic test help us take the guesswork out of the experiment?

There are three particular drugs where genetic testing might help people use them more appropriately: The anti-clotting drug, clopidogrel, or Plavix, is taken by people who might have had a heart stent and who may be at risk of blood clots. Clotting blood, in itself, is not all that bad and prevents you from bleeding to death even from a small cut. But if your blood clots inside an artery, you could be looking at a heart attack or stroke. Not good.

Plavix inhibits clotting, but not to the same extent in everyone. Some people have genetic variations that reduce the activity of a critical enzyme called

CYP2C19 so the drug may not get converted into its active form in your body. Which is to say, if you are taking Plavix to reduce your risk of heart attacks, strokes and death from cardiovascular causes, the drug may not work. For people with a different genetic makeup, a single dose of Plavix may be like getting a triple dose because of a genetic variation that causes the body to process the drug incredibly efficiently. Those people may be much more at risk from bleeding, which is also potentially fatal.

Do people who take Plavix need a genetic test to see whether they have any genetic weirdness that affects how the drug is processed? My sense is before you decide if you need a genetic test to optimize the use of a drug, you should decide if you need the drug in the first place. People take aspirin for the same reason they take Plavix – to prevent a future heart attack or stroke – and in my reading of the literature, such as the 20,000-patient, randomized, double-blind, multinational study CAPRIE (Clopidogrel versus Aspirin in Patients at Risk of Ischemic Events), Plavix is shown to be only slightly more effective in reducing rates of heart attack or stroke. It is about 0.5 percent more effective than aspirin, effectively helping about one in 200 people. Yet in terms of whether or not the drug helps you live any longer, both drugs score equally and it won't matter whether you take Plavix or aspirin. At about 20 times the cost, is Plavix more effective than good, old aspirin? Probably not.

Another drug not only widely prescribed, but for which genetic testing may help, is warfarin (Coumadin®); some people's genes might be linked to a heightened sensitivity to the drug. People who have been deemed at risk for blood clots often take this blood thinner, which was originally developed as rat poison and is still used as such. It is a very tricky drug and doctors know that finding the exact right dose for any patient is difficult. Too little and the drug won't have any effect while too much could result in uncontrolled bleeding. What is considered 'too little' or 'too much' varies enormously between people. This matters a great deal because as one of the most widely prescribed drugs in the world, warfarin's potential complications, related to dose size, are one of the main drug-related reasons people end up being hospitalized.

Because versions of a gene called CYP2C9 can slow down the body's ability to break down warfarin, it may accumulate in your bloodstream and you may need much less warfarin than the average person. This genetic variation may be found in as many as 20 percent of people with European ancestry, but it is rarely found in people with Asian or African ancestry. Which leads us to another issue: the ideal dosing for warfarin, as with many other drugs, varies by ethnicity.

Some drugs work so well in some people that they become poisoned by too much of the active ingredient. The HIV/AIDS drug abacavir (trade name Ziagen) is used to treat HIV by helping inhibit an enzyme that helps the virus reproduce. About one in 10 people treated with abacavir have a hypersensitive reaction, including developing a fever, rash, respiratory problems, and so on, symptoms that typically disappear after they stop taking the drug. Some health professionals have called for genetic testing to see if an individual harbours a particular immune marker called HLA-B*5701, before they get abacavir. Suffice to say even if you don't have this marker, you can have other types of adverse reactions.

At the end of the day, do we need to try to find genetic information in order to use drugs more safely? That's a good question to which I would answer, "Maybe, but not yet." Why? Because the science isn't quite there yet. These tests are expensive and the results, while perhaps suggestive, are never conclusive. You may have a gene that indicates you *might* be hypersensitive to a drug, but it doesn't automatically mean you will be. A safe and controlled trial may be a better measure of how well you tolerate a drug.

The bottom line worth remembering is that while we humans are very similar, when it comes to taking drugs, we may be very different. As one very trusted pharmacologist reminds me, the key principle is "Start low and go slow." Constant vigilance to determine when and under which conditions it is appropriate to take a drug – taking the least amount you need to do the job – is always warranted and looking deep within your genes provides few definitive answers.

Right now, there are only a few drugs for which genetic tests exist, but there promises to be many more as scientists continue to collect data on our SNPs, sniffing out 'genotypes' that can predict any risk or reward related to taking a prescription drug.

In future, look out for drug companies that start co-marketing their products with genetic tests. They'll be selling genetic tests, not so much to offer promises of health, but more to offer avoidance of drug-related adverse effects. Even now, genetic testing is beginning to create hope around a future of designer pharmaceutical regimes where the shape and size of your medicine cabinet depends on your personal genetic makeup.

Alan Cassels is a drug policy researcher at UVic and is writing a consumer's guide to the sale of direct-to-consumer genetic testing.

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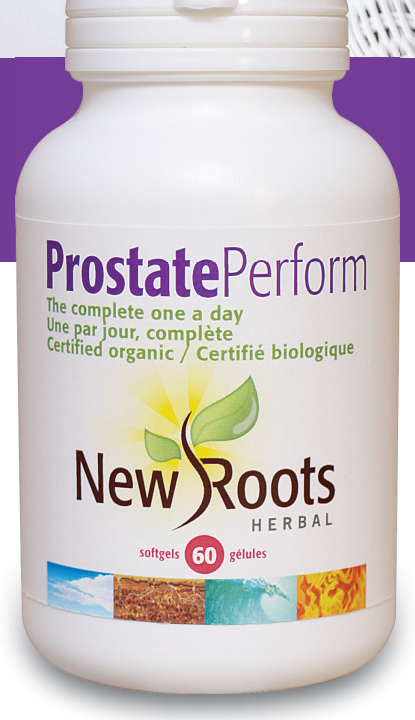

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What you should know about H1N1

by Alan Cassels

THIS SEASON'S flu bug known as Swine flu or H1N1, seems to have prompted a lot of people to ask me, "Should I get vaccinated or not?" I have been quite loathe to write anything on the Swine flu for the simple reason that Canada's media is already doing a superb job of filling daily newspaper pages and the airwaves and TV channels. They're covering every tick and wrinkle in the vaccine development plan: the world's pandemic preparedness, timing and access to the vaccines and so on, *ad nauseam*. However, my publisher insisted, so let me apologize in advance for adding my two cents to the din.

Is this pandemic worth worrying about? Probably not. If we can learn from the experience from the southern hemisphere, which just had its flu season, mortality from the pandemic appeared to be relatively low and most countries had flu-related mortality rates of less than one person per 100,000. That's tiny.

Does the vaccine work? It depends on your definition of 'work.' It 'works' in terms of helping you develop antibodies if you get the shot. However, are those antibodies enough to keep you from getting sick? We all know people who got the flu shot and still got the flu, right? When people tell you the flu vaccine reduces mortality by 50 percent, you need to know that these stats come from "cohort studies," which compare death rates in vaccinated people versus non-vaccinated people. The truth is, those two groups may be very fundamentally different to start with and the vaccine might have had nothing to do with the observed outcomes. This "Healthy User Bias" is a usual feature of low-quality drug trials. Only random assignment or randomization can really prevent this.

But what about the Spanish flu of 1919? Couldn't the Swine flu pandemic be a repeat of this massively deadly pandemic? Not likely. It's healthier to think in terms of probabilities, not possibilities. While it is possible an asteroid could strike the earth tomorrow and kill us all, this is improbable. The Spanish flu had a high death count partly because it took place in a poorer, less hygienic and antibiotic-free world than what we have today.

But surely the H1N1 flu is severe and deadly? Compared to what? The regular run of the mill seasonal flu? Nope. There is substantial evidence that the mortality rate from H1N1 flu is actually much smaller than from the seasonal flu.

Young people are getting it and some are dying. Surely, the public health people can't be wrong. Not entirely. If they didn't push a mass immunization campaign, they wouldn't be doing their jobs. Focusing on death in the outliers isn't productive and repeating the refrain that the vaccine is "safe and effective" sounds strained. Do we need reminding that in 2005 the World Health Organization (WHO) predicted that up to 150 million people could die from Avian flu? (The eventual death toll was 262 people.)

Isn't it public spirited to get vaccinated so you won't spread the virus to others? Sounds plausible, but is that recommendation evidence-based? Have researchers, who have combed through hundreds of flu-vaccine studies, found studies suggesting this kind of effect for the general population? No. Of hundreds of studies on flu immunization, only about four are of sufficient rigour to say anything definitive and two of those studies showed the vaccine to be useless.

Is the vaccine 'safe'? Adjuvanted vaccine or non-adjuvanted? Again, depends on what you mean by 'safe'. Within the bounds in which it was studied, the H1N1 vaccine doesn't appear to have much of a tendency to produce adverse effects. I don't think anyone can say with certainty that the adjuvanted vaccines are more dangerous than the other. And no one on the planet has any answers about the long-term safety of the current flu vaccines. No one.

What's your bottom line? What needs to be done to eliminate all the uncertainty about the vaccine? More research. Better research like large, placebo-controlled RCTs (randomized controlled trials) on the annual flu shot will erase some of these controversies and establish where the benefits are. If we followed patients over the long term, we could get a much clearer picture of the vaccine's safety and effectiveness and the effects of natural immunity. Some say that studying the sacred flu shot with randomized, placebo-controlled trials is unethical. To me, it is unethical to carry on large- scale, hype-inducing public health policies without collecting the data (through randomized trials) needed to prove we are buying the health outcomes we think we are. I am not getting the vaccine, but I would if they agreed to include me as a study subject: "If they randomize, I'll immunize."

Any last words? My final recommendation: lighten up folks; it's only the flu. Let's see a government policy of calmness coupled with accurate information for both professionals and public. Hype can make us all ill.

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by Laura Cook and Rayna Sagness

THE STRENGTH and effectiveness of your immune system are directly controlled by 80 percent of your digestive system's ability. In other words, if you eat well-balanced nutritional foods and you do not have any digestive issues affecting your body's capacity to properly digest those nutrients, proteins and enzymes, you should have a very strong and impenetrable immune system with which to fight off pending viruses, bacteria and pathogens.

On the other hand, if you tend to binge on low-nutrient fast foods, junk food and food items with high sugar content – candy, bread, pop, alcohol and juice – on a regular basis, your digestive system has nothing to offer your immune system for support. Consuming even less than 10 grams of sugar shuts down your immune system for four hours.

Factors affecting the immune system

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Avoid regular consumption of acidic forming foods: yeast breads, gluten, fruit juices, red meat, dairy, 'natural flavours,' alcohol, processed foods (enzymes and nutrients are destroyed during prep/heat), fast food/junk food (little or no value here), bottled water (acidic and dead).

Foods for great nutrition: Kale (calcium and chlorophyll), whole food shakes, chlorophyll (mint or plain) with water (cleans blood), raw or lightly steamed veggies, long grain rice, rice/almond milk, spices. Filter tap water with ionizer or pour a few litres into a pitcher. Let it sit on the counter to allow the chlorine to evaporate (1hour/litre minimum usually helps.)

Consuming even less than 10 grams of sugar shuts down your immune system for four hours.

Decrease your toxic load

Filter your water. This reduces the harmful toxins such as chlorine, lead and pharmaceuticals. PH-balanced water is key. Get out into nature and enjoy some fresh air. Toxins from vehicles and industries are constantly being pumped into the air you breathe.

Enjoy local and organic foods. These are not only pesticide free but also have an abundance of nutrients to support your body. Supporting our local farmers also keeps our money in our communities and out of the pockets of large corporations.

Limit or avoid microwave use. Swiss researchers conducted a study in 1992 that showed a drop in white blood cell count and an increase in the LDL (bad) cholesterol of people who consumed microwaved food (aside from other EMF dangers). Avoid trans-fats found in fried foods, pre-prepared foods, partially hydrogenated and hydrogenated foods (margarine is the most common) and fast foods. These trans-fats will block the 'good' fats from entering the cell membrane and promote the degeneration of nerve tissue. You have choices.

Laura Cook and Rayna Sagness are holistic allergists and certified nutritional consultant/registered holistic nutritionists. Laura is co-founder of Zero Allergies Inc. Her practice specializes in allergy symptom elimination without the use of needles or drugs with a focus on nutritional support. www.zeroallergies.com / info@zeroallergies.com 604-635-3900.

Rebuild your body with a 30-day cleanse

Eighty percent of your immune system is in your digestive system. Assist your body in a rebuild and you give yourself the best chance to fight viruses and bacteria and avoid allergies. Purging your body of toxins, balancing your PH and avoiding bacteria-feeding foods will definitely increase the function of your immune system as well as your overall bodily functions.
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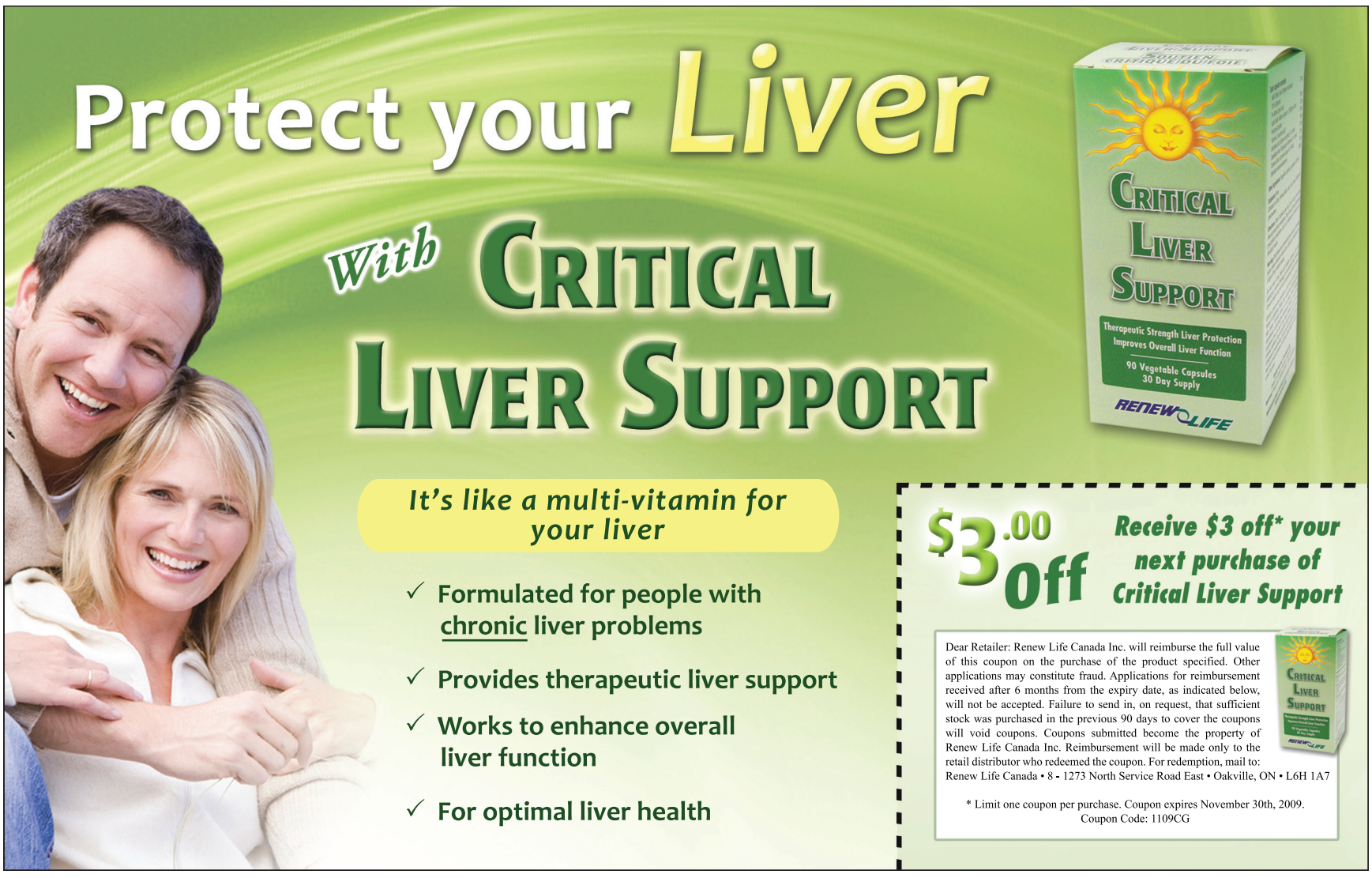
2. Take herbs to kill parasites.
3. Limit mycotoxic (mold-harbouring) foods.
4. Take herbs to cleanse and rebuild the liver and intestines.
5. Introduce healthy intestinal flora.
6. Take extra enzymatic support.
7. Provide fibre to ensure everything is moving thoroughly.
8. Eat alkaline-forming foods (cook books are available on the subject).
9. Use only herbs specific to the needs of your body.

A qualified holistic allergist and nutritionist can find your herbal match to help avoid adverse reactions and ensure the herbs will be effective for your situation.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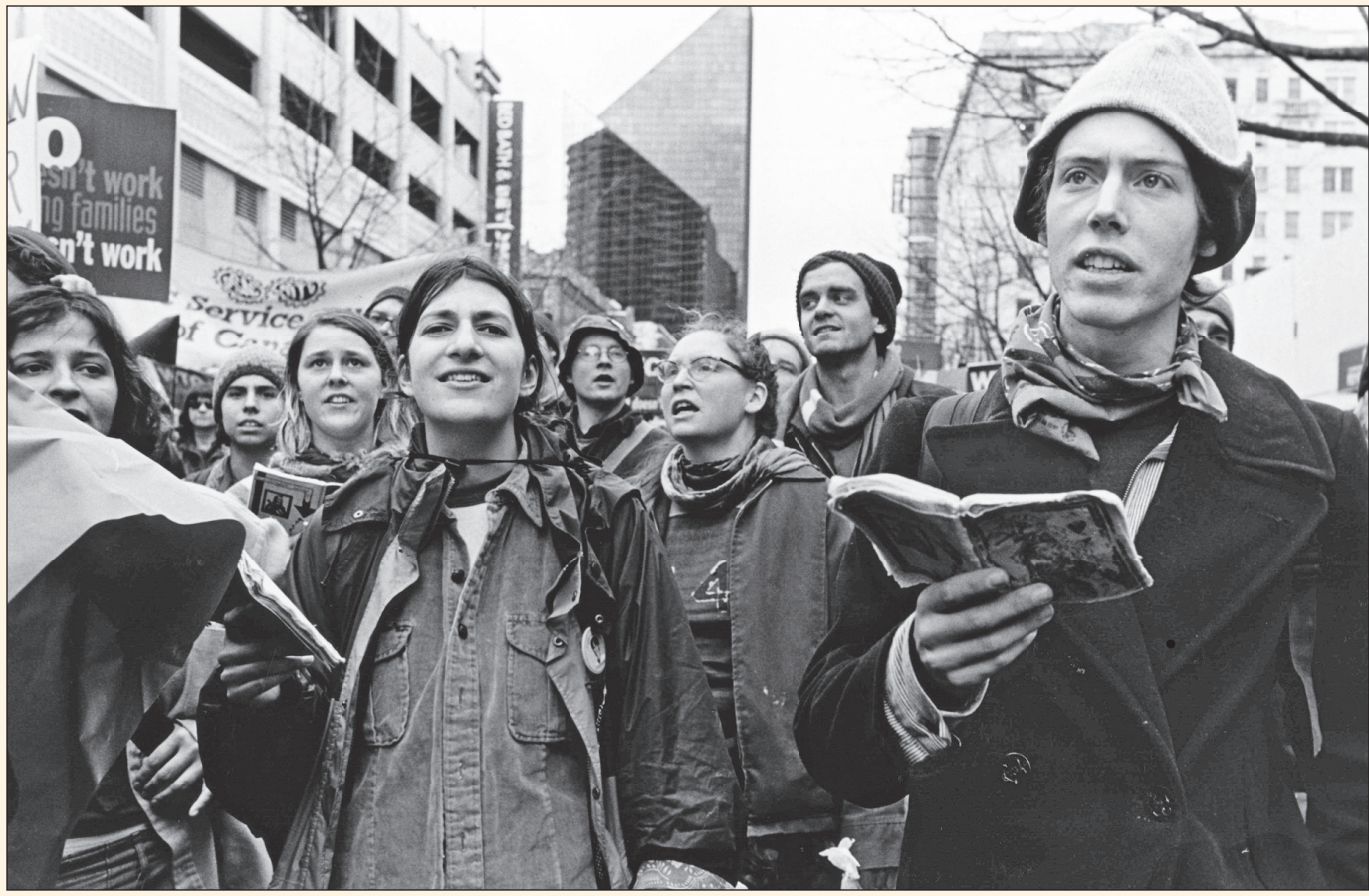
The Battle of Seattle

Looking back 10 years

by Geoff Olson



Peaceful WTO protestors succeeded in their goal of "shutting down" the most powerful organization in the world. Photo by Elaine Briere.

THIS MONTH marks the 10th anniversary of protests against the World Trade Organization's conference in Seattle. In preparing for the November 30th opening of the WTO's "millennial round of talks," the mayor's office and local police had no contingency plan for one inconceivable possibility: that protestors would succeed in their goal of "shutting down" the most powerful organization in the world.

How did this happen, and what, if anything, has been the legacy of the "Battle in Seattle" in 1999? Law enforcement officials, civic leaders and trade delegates were unprepared for the hallucinatory events that unfolded in the so-called "Emerald City." Lifted out of their consensual Kansas by a tornado of democratic dissent, officials found themselves stranded somewhere between a bad mushroom trip and Munchkinland.

By the morning of November 30, Seattle's streets were transformed by a massive, colourful wave of street theatre, while passively-resisting protestors in the downtown core kept trade delegates from conducting their Oz-like deliberations. To add a nightmarish L. Frank Baum touch, police in riot gear dispensed truncheon blows, tear gas and pepper spray. The only things missing were the flying monkeys –unless you count black-clad anarchists brandishing hammers, crowbars, paint bombs and spray paint.

What's been forgotten is how massive this event was and how it rippled across the world. Throughout the week, the firefighters' union refused authorities' requests to train firehoses on protestors. Longshore workers closed down every West Coast port from Alaska to Los Angeles. Just before, during and after the WTO protest, thousands of Indian farmers marched to Bangalore in solidarity. In 80 cities across France, 75,000 people took to the streets and 800 miners clashed with police. European activists stormed the WTO world headquarters in Geneva. In Turkey, peasants, trade unionists and environmentalists marched on the capital of Ankara. Thousands marched in sympathy in the Philippines, Pakistan, Portugal, South Korea, Turkey, and across Europe, the US and Canada.

This was not a simple gathering of aging, disaffected American lefties or bongo-playing kids with dreadlocks, with a trendy grievance against the world. This WAS the world, saying 'no more' to secretive, unelected officials with the power to expand transnational corporate power past the control of all governments.

The Battle of Seattle was not the first successful pushback against international trade agreements. In 1998, an international coalition of NGOs, environmental groups and labour organizations succeeded in its campaign against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment. The broad support against the MAI was reflected by the city of Seattle itself in April of 1999 when the city council declared the city a MAI-free zone by unanimous vote, in concert with other cities across the world.

Leaked documents subsequently revealed that European officials had decided to shift the entire MAI agenda to the WTO conference in Seattle. Activists prepared to take their fight to the Pacific Northwest.

Non-governmental organizations from across the world, environmental groups, labour unions, student groups and even religious groups spent months preparing for the WTO protests. Many of their plans incorporated European-style street theatre and culture jamming. As a trailer for the main feature, thousands of hoax editions of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* hit the streets on November 24. The front cover wraparound, inserted into piles of newspapers awaiting distribution, contained bogus stories such as "Boeing to move overseas" and "Clinton pledges help for poorest nations."

"Many activists have romanticized Seattle as a semi-spontaneous rebellion that arose as if by luck. This ignores the key strategizing, mass mobilizing, networking, education and alliance-building that made Seattle possible," wrote Art and Revolution founder David Solnit in a 2008 article in Yes! Magazine. "We won because we were strategic, well organized and part of strong local, regional, national and international networks."

With such a wide divergence of interests, it was inevitable that the activism would have many facets. This was to be the first large-scale protest in the US that wasn't wholly committed to the ideals of Gandhi and King. The AFL-CIO organized the labour rally and parade into the city (bypassing the protest area), with the intent of influencing national trade policy and the impending presidential election through a peaceful show of numbers. The so-called black bloc of anarchist groups targeted specific corporate outlets in Seattle for property damage. In between these two poles, the Direct Action Network immodestly sought to shut down the WTO by blocking access to the Washington State Convention & Trade Centre, through passive resistance.

The Direct Action Network was a coalition of environmental and political activist groups, including the Rainforest Action Network, Art and Revolution and the Ruckus Society. Long before its members hit the streets, DAN "had coordinated nonviolent protest training, communications and collective strategy and tactics through a decentralized process consultation/consensus decision making," writes Paul de Armond in his 2000 paper *Netwar in the Emerald City*.

Well before the demonstrations began, de Armond explains, DAN had full multimedia access, through the use of the Internet, cell phones, police scanners and video cameras. The Battle of Seattle was the first full-fledged information war, with DAN having an advantage over the city police, who seemed to be caught on the wrong side of the cyber-divide, unable to adapt their tactics to fast-changing circumstances. DAN, which eschewed a top-down chain of command that could easily be decapitated, used protest tactics partly honed in the forests of the Pacific Northwest.

Early on the morning of November 30, Direct Action Network protestors seized control of empty intersections, locking themselves together with bicycle locks and tubes and blocking access to the Convention Centre and surrounding hotels. Within hours, police were caught in an untenable situation: supporting the tens of thousands of people in the permit-approved AFL-CIO march from the stadium to downtown, and suppressing the crowds hunkered down at intersections. What happened next would turn the tide for the protestors.

I arrived in Seattle that morning on a bus carrying other reporters from Vancouver to the Seattle labour rally at the Key Arena. The AFL-CEO rally had extended invitations to other organizations to join – a mix of social justice, environmental and

human rights groups. It made for an estimated crowd of 20,000 and an extraordinary mix of people. Forest workers mingled with tree-huggers, machinists and wonkish-looking types in expensive Gore-Tex jackets. There were clean-cut students with notepads, senior citizens in rain gear and retro hippies with placards.

After the speeches, streams of marchers flowed from the rally into the streets. The plan was to march downtown and then take a wide turn back, bypassing the protest area. Thousands of people ignored the parade marshals and made their way toward ground zero where DAN protestors were chained together in the intersections.

In his *Netwar* paper, Paul de Armond explains how DAN had fielded a hardcore contingent of "first wave" protestors for key city intersections. They had voluntarily chosen to risk violent confrontation from police and arrests once the demonstrations began. "The first wave consisted of 200-300 people in 'lockdown' affinity groups – those who had opted for nonviolent civil disobedience and arrest. Their job was to penetrate the area close to the conference site, seize the dozen strategic intersections that controlled movement in the protest target and hang on until reinforcements arrived… The second wave included several thousand protesters, also organized as affinity groups, who had opted for nonviolent demonstration and not being arrested. Their task was to protect the first wave from police violence and plug up the streets by sheer numbers and passive resistance. Many more people joined this second wave than DAN expected."

The "third wave" was supplied by labour members who split from the designated AFL-CIO parade route, along with several thousand people constituting the People's Assembly, a coalition of environmental and humans rights groups. With the added numbers of people in the streets, the surrounded police, with their cordon broken and cut off from officers outside, could not properly carry out their arrests of the lockdown groups.

By midday, members of the Direct Action Network learned they had succeeded in "shutting down" the WTO. They would succeed in shutting it down for the rest of the week.

"As police fought our blockades with armored cars and fired rubber, wooden and plastic bullets, as well as tear gas, pepper spray and concussion grenades, the corporate media looked for ways to dismiss a popular uprising as merely a few dozen people window- breaking corporate chain stores," wrote David Solnit. The anarchist's 'black bloc' was later estimated at between one hundred members, slightly less than the lockdown "affinity groups" of DAN. While they may have only constituted a vanishingly small fraction of the crowd, the anarchists captured the mainstream media's attention through deliberate vandalization of Seattle corporate outlets.

Local media left the impression that the violent police response followed the trashing of Seattle shops. Yet the police attacks on the crowd began several hours before when DAN protestors had taken control of a five-block area around the convention centre. According to multiple sources, the King County Sheriff's Office and Seattle Police Department fired pepper spray, tear gas canisters, stun grenades and eventually rubber bullets at protesters at several intersections. With the release of tear gas around 10 AM, the mood in the streets changed. The black bloc saw its cue and began its spree of property damage, mostly in a two-block area.

Other protestors, witnessing the black bloc members smashing windows, began scuffling with them in the streets, demanding them to stop. Though the anarchists were greatly outnumbered by the nonviolent protesters, and their commercial damage limited, their "propaganda of the deed" instantly became the meme associated with the Battle in Seattle.

At one major intersection mid-afternoon, I discovered upended dumpsters blocking traffic, with protestors calmly standing atop them. Thousands of people milled about, some singing and chanting, others looking dumbfounded that they had taken control of the streets. It looked as much like a costume party as a protest. A kid in a Flash costume leapt around next to me as a young African-American with a megaphone climbed on to a dumpster to address the crowd. "We're here to look out for one another," he said, " but remember; this is a non-violent protest. No craziness."

Two nervous-looking guys in trench coats, who may have been trade delegates, crossed the street in the midst of this strange oasis of calm. "Nice briefcases," someone yelled out. I ducked down a side street and tuned back to see the intersection I had just left, now blocked with riot police. There was some jostling at the police line and I watched as a tear gas canister spun into the air and down into the crowds. As smoke billowed down the street, I turned to see a small group of kids, who couldn't have been more than high school age, in neat, pressed uniforms. They pulled gas masks and drum kits out of their backpacks, struck up a tattoo, and marched in formation toward the melee down the street. They disappeared into a tear gas fog, armed with no more than a steady beat. It looked like a children's crusade against the WTO.

This is one aspect of the Battle in Seattle that went largely unreported and unanalyzed. An estimated 50,000 people came into the city that day, in a mood that was mostly earnest and festive – at least before the police response changed the tone of the protest. There was an immense outpouring of creativity, the kind later associated with Burning Man celebrations. I appreciated the set of life-size coffins bearing labels such as "worker's rights," "health," "biodiversity" and "real food." But my personal favourite was a Speedo-wearing protestor wearing a globe on his head, with two holes cut out for eyes. "I'm out of control, I'm out of control," he hollered as he weaved down Seattle's steep streets on roller skates.

It was, in essence, an out-of-control megablock party, turbocharged by groups like Art and Revolution, which put together an eight-day series of workshops and trainings leading up to the November 30 protest, involving street theatre, puppet building, mask making, costume design and music. In her book *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy* (2006), Barbara Ehrenreich elaborates on this new protest phenomenon that extends past Seattle in space and time:

"In fact, there has been, in the last few years, a growing carnivalization of protest demonstrations, perhaps especially among young 'antiglobalization' activists in Europe, Latin America, Canada, and the United States. They wear costumes – most famously, the turtle suits symbolizing environmental concerns at the huge Seattle protest of 1999. They put on masks or paint their faces; they bring drums to their demonstrations and sometimes dance through the streets; they send up the authorities with street theatre and effigies… The urge to transform one's appearance, to dance outdoors, to mock the powerful and embrace perfect strangers is not easy to suppress," Ehrenreich writes.

At one locked-down intersection near ground zero, I witnessed a spirit consonant with the parade: grinning protestors holding hands and chanting as police converged on them. The media's accounts of the carnivalization were sparse, but telling. The *Seattle Post- Intelligencer* noted how protestors danced in the streets on Friday, December 3, as *continued p.31…*

Ten years ago this month, men and women, young and old, rich and poor – from farmers and machinists to young university students and loggers – marched in step, chanting, "This is what democracy looks like." A window opened, briefly, to a more sane and sustainable future.

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The flowering of human consciousness

A NEW EARTH Eckhart Tolle

It is with great pleasure that we present the first excerpt from Eckhart Tolle's best-selling book, A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose. *We will continue to run monthly excerpts from this book in subsequent editions of* Common Ground.

EARTH, 114 million years ago, one morning just after sunrise: the first flower ever to appear on the planet opens up to receive the rays of the sun. Prior to this momentous event that heralds an evolutionary transformation in the life of plants, the planet had already been covered in vegetation for millions of years. The first flower probably did not survive for long and flowers must have remained rare and isolated phenomena, since conditions were most likely not yet favorable for a widespread flowering to occur. One day, however, a critical threshold was reached and suddenly there would have been an explosion of color and scent all over the planet – if a perceiving consciousness had been there to witness it.

Much later, those delicate and fragrant beings we call flowers would come to play an essential part in the evolution of consciousness of another species. Humans would increasingly be drawn to and fascinated by them. As the consciousness of human beings developed, flowers were most likely the first thing they came to value that had no utilitarian purpose for them, that is to say, not linked in some way to survival. They provided inspiration to countless artists, poets and mystics. Jesus tells us to contemplate the flowers and learn from them how to live. The Buddha is said to have given a "silent sermon" once during which he held up a flower and gazed at it. After a while, one of those present, a monk called Mahakasyapa, began to smile. He is said to have been the only one who had understood the sermon. According to legend, that smile (that is to say, realization) was handed down by 28 successive masters and much later became the origin of Zen.

Seeing beauty in a flower could awaken humans, however briefly, to the beauty that is an essential part of their own innermost being, their true nature. The first recognition of beauty was one of the most significant events in the evolution of human consciousness. The feelings of joy and love are intrinsically connected to that recognition. Without our fully realizing it, flowers would become for us an expression in form of that which is most high, most sacred and ultimately formless within ourselves. Flowers, more fleeting, more ethereal and more delicate than the plants out of which they emerged, would become like messengers from another realm, like a bridge between the world of physical forms and the formless. They not only had a scent that was delicate and pleasing to humans, but also brought a fragrance from the realm of spirit. Using the word "enlightenment" in a wider sense than the conventionally accepted one, we could look upon flowers as the enlightenment of plants.

Any life-form in any realm – mineral, vegetable, animal or human – can be said to undergo "enlightenment." It is, however, an extremely rare occurrence since it is more than an evolutionary progression; it also implies a discontinuity in its development, a leap to an entirely different level of Being and, most important, a lessening of materiality.

What could be heavier and more impenetrable than a rock, the densest of all forms? And yet some rocks undergo a change in their molecular structure, turn into crystals and so become transparent to the light. Some carbons, under inconceivable heat and pressure, turn into diamonds and some heavy minerals into other precious stones.

Most crawling reptilians, the most earthbound of all creatures, have remained unchanged for millions of years. Some, however, grew feathers and wings and turned into birds, thus defying the force of gravity that had held them for so long. They didn't become better at crawling or walking, but transcended crawling and walking entirely.

Since time immemorial, flowers, crystals, precious stones and birds have held special significance for the human spirit. Like all life forms, they are, of course, temporary manifestations of the underlying one Life, one Consciousness. Their special significance and the reason why humans feel such fascination for and affinity with them can be attributed to their ethereal quality.

Once there is a certain degree of Presence, of still and alert attention in human beings' perceptions, they can sense the divine life essence, the one indwelling consciousness or spirit in every creature, every life-form, recognize it as one with their own essence and so love it as themselves. Until this happens, however, most humans see only the outer forms, unaware of the inner essence, just as they are unaware of their own essence and identify only with their own physical and psychological form.

In the case of a flower, a crystal, precious stone, or bird, however, even someone with little or no Presence can occasionally sense that there is more there than the mere physical existence of that form, without knowing that this is the reason why he or she is drawn toward it, feels an affinity with it. Because of its ethereal nature, its form obscures the indwelling spirit to a lesser degree than is the case with other life forms. The exception to this are all newborn life forms – babies, puppies, kittens, lambs, and so on. They are fragile, delicate, not yet firmly established in materiality. An innocence, a sweetness and beauty that are not of this world still shine through them. They delight even relatively insensitive humans.

So when you are alert and contemplate a flower, crystal, or bird without naming it mentally, it becomes a window for you into the formless. There is an inner opening, how- ever slight, into the realm of spirit. This is why these three "enlightened" life forms have played such an important part in the evolution of human consciousness since ancient times; why, for example, the jewel in the lotus flower is a central symbol of Buddhism and a white bird, the dove, signifies the Holy Spirit in Christianity. They have been preparing the ground for a more profound shift in planetary consciousness that is destined to take place in the human species. This is the spiritual awakening that we are beginning to witness now.

The purpose of this book

Is humanity ready for a transformation of consciousness, an inner flowering so radical and profound that, compared to it, the flowering of *continued p.31…*

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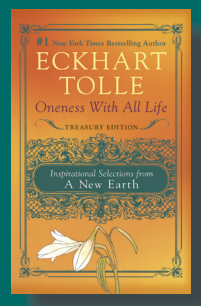

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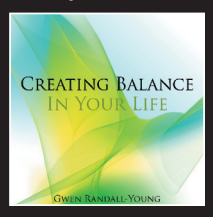

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SPIRITUALITY

SOMETIMES, there are people in our lives with whom we have painful connections. It might be a parent, whom we hold responsible for a difficult childhood, a friend who has betrayed us, an ex-partner or a supervisor or colleague in the workplace.

These relationships may remain unresolved either because raising the issues may create more difficulty or because we simply do not want the relationship anymore. Either way, as we try to move on, we may find we take the pain with us.

Is it that the person hurt us so deeply that our wounds simply will not heal? Is it our karma to suffer some punishment for harm we have done to others in this or a past life? Or is the pain, in part, our own creation? Any or all of these reasons may be true, but the third option is the only one that allows us to create a different future for ourselves.

When we talk about creating our own pain, this does not mean that we have somehow 'attracted' painful situations to facilitate our learning. It means the situation, in itself, is not the problem, but rather it is our response to the situation that creates the pain. It is our holding on and continuing to put our energy into the memory of the problems that keeps the pain alive and thriving within our consciousness.

Our learning is not so much to ensure that we avoid painful situations and relationships; that would mean avoiding love and life. It is about learning to let go of the pain. If we keep thinking and talking about the painful past and begin to define ourselves in terms of what happened to us, we bind that pain to ourselves. This does not mean we should suppress pain, however.

It is important to talk about what has happened to us, but the goal is to heal it and move on, rather than continuing to etch it deeper and deeper into our psyches. Speaking badly of the ones who hurt us or fuelling vindictive feelings only creates more toxic energy. This is harmful to the physical body and, like an inversion layer, blocks the rays of the light of wisdom to which we all have access. This kind of toxic energy hardens our hearts.

The tendency to hold on to pain, almost like an emotional constipation, may, in part, be genetic. I know of one family in which for at least three and perhaps even four consecutive generations, there was one sibling who stopped speaking to one or more of the other siblings and the silence lasted for decades, even until death. The individual held on to perceived slights, ruminated and obsessed about them and never let go.

Genetics create predispositions, not destinies. A family history of pain and suffering is all the more reason to work to change the pattern, rather than unconsciously passing it on.

Others can inflict pain upon us, but only we can release ourselves from emotional pain. It takes a lot of energy to maintain the pain, thus releasing it frees up large stores of energy for creativity, loving and moving forward in our lives.

Letting go of pain does not mean that whatever someone has done to us is OK. It only means that we do not choose to spend the rest of our lives suffering from it.

Others can inflict pain upon us, but only we can release ourselves from emotional pain. It takes a lot of energy to maintain the pain, thus releasing it frees up large stores of energy for creativity, loving and moving forward in our lives.

Think of every resentment, pain and grudge you carry as a heavy piece of baggage. Picture yourself dragging this baggage everywhere you go. Then, imagine setting the bags down and walking into your future without them. All that is left now is to choose what you will do with your baggage.

It's your future and it will be what you make it. Choose consciously.

Gwen Randall-Young is a psychotherapist in private practice and author of Growing Into Soul: The Next Step in Human Evolution. *For more articles, permission to reprint and information about her books and "Deep Powerful Change" personal growth/hypnosis CDs, visit www.gwen.ca*

Compassionate choices

NUTRISPEAK Vesanto Melina MS, RD

If slaughterhouses had glass walls, everyone would be a vegetarian.
– Sir Paul McCartney

IT BAFFLES ME that so many 'animal lovers' can chow down on a chunk of animal flesh. People attribute human emotions to their pets and take their beloved pup, cat or bird to an animal clinic when medical care is needed and then proceed to eat another animal that is equally intelligent and capable of feeling.

For example, pigs are easily as smart as dogs and have shown capabilities comparable to those of chimps in playing computer games, problem solving and using computers to control the environment in their pens. All 'food animals' can feel pain, fear and distress.

For interesting reading on this topic, see *When Elephants Weep* by Jeffrey Masson (available at libraries and bookstores) and *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows* by Melanie Joy.

It is strange that people who are critical consumers when it comes to which jeans they buy will leave their food choices unexamined. If the possibility of choosing a plant-based diet arises, people may support their animal product choices based on outdated notions that animal protein is superior or required; that vegetarian meals necessarily take longer to cook; that they can't change habits from childhood or that the animal had a reasonably good life up to the point it was sent to the slaughterhouse.

Each year, more than 55 billion pigs, cows, turkeys, chickens and other sentient land animals suffer and die in the world's factory farms and slaughterhouses (www.wfad.org). Loving parents, dedicated teachers, kind hearted philanthropists and even environmental activists somehow run out of compassion or look the other way when it comes to creatures that we have designated as 'food animals.'

Children are naturally compassionate and they sense our kinship with animals. When a youngster has raised a pig or chicken, she or he recognizes the cruelty involved in sending their little friend to 'market.' That child must be convinced, through a flood of tears, that a sudden switching off of sentiment is required and that such lack of concern for the animal's plight is the norm in our culture.

Certainly, we have no dietary requirement for any animal products. "It is the position of the American Dietetic Association that appropriately planned vegetarian diets, including total vegetarian or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well planned vegetarian diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the lifecycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood and adolescence and for athletes." For the latest version of the Association's position on vegetarian diets, see http://www.eatright.org/ada/files/VegetarianPositionFINAL.pdf Readers may also find an earlier Canada/US version on my website.

In addition to giving us tons of fattening foods and increased risk of the major chronic diseases, factory-farming operations are breeding grounds that have provided us with swine flu and avian flu.

There are appetizing alternatives to all animal products. One that I look forward to trying is a cheap, healthy, 100 percent non-dairy 'cheese' for pizzas and other prepared dishes that was recently launched by Cargill. Apparently, it is an improvement over earlier cheese alternatives.

Vesanto Melina is a local dietitian and co-author of nutrition classics Becoming Vegetarian, Becoming Vegan, Raising Vegetarian Children, The Food Allergy Survival Guide *and* The Raw Revolution Diet.
604-882-6782, www.nutrispeak.com

Time-saving tacos

makes 4

For an instant meal, one of the fastest, nutritionally balanced combinations you can serve is the well-loved taco. Allow for one or two per person. If you prefer burritos, replace the taco shells with soft, flour tortillas.

4 hard, corn taco shells
1 cup refried beans or chili beans
1 cup shredded lettuce
1 large, ripe tomato, chopped
1/2 to 1 ripe avocado, mashed or chopped
1/2 cup salsa or taco sauce
1/2 cup sliced, pitted olives
1/2 cup grated soy cheese (optional)

Warm the shells and warm the beans in a skillet, vegetable steamer or microwave. Place taco shells, beans, lettuce, tomatoes, avocado, salsa, olives and cheese (if using) in serving bowls on table, allowing for individual assembly.

DO YOU HAVE OCD?

Do you experience unwanted, persistent intrusive thoughts? Do you feel compelled to wash, count or check repeatedly?

UBC's Department of Psychiatry is currently seeking people with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) to participate in a study.

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One life, one tribe, one chance

Grandmother Agnes Baker Pilgrim leads the Powwow.

photo and story by Kami Kanetsuka

"We, the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers, represent a global alliance of prayer, education and healing for our Mother Earth, all Her inhabitants, all the children, and for the next seven generations to come. We are deeply concerned with the unprecedented destruction of our Mother Earth and the destruction of indigenous ways of life. We believe the teachings of our ancestors will light our way through an uncertain future. We look to further our vision through the realization of projects that protect our diverse cultures: lands, medicines, language and ceremonial ways of prayer and through projects that educate and nurture our children."

IMAGINE A COUNTRY where "when the Grandmothers speak, the president listens." That is how it is in Gabon, Africa, where Bernadette Rebienot comes from. Grandmother Bernadette is one of the Thirteen International Indigenous Grandmothers – shamans, medicine women and healers – brought together through visions and prophecies.

For centuries, prophesies from different traditions have foretold the coming together of the Grandmothers. Unaware of these prophecies, North American spiritual teacher Jyoti had been praying for a way to preserve the teachings of indigenous people and make them more accessible. After receiving a powerful vision and dreaming of 13 elders around a table, she was compelled to pursue the vision. While visiting Bernadette Rebienot, a shaman in Gabon, she mentioned the dream. Bernadette had had a similar dream and said, "The time is now; we must manifest it."

With the help of Jyoti's spiritual community Kayumari, 16 letters went out across the globe to holders of indigenous teachings. The 13 grandmothers who accepted came from Africa, Brazil, Tibet, Nepal, Mexico, Central and North America. Many of them had experienced their own version of the vision. The first gathering took place in 2004 in upstate New York. At that time, the Grandmothers decided to become an alliance and meet in council and prayer twice annually. Gloria Steinem, Alice Walker and Luisah Teish were also present at the first gathering.

For some years, I had been hearing about these Grandmothers. I heard prophecies such as, "When the Grandmothers speak, the world will be changed." I knew it was time to connect with them when I met an indigenous woman, Maria Teresa, last winter in Mexico and she showed a film about the Grandmothers' visit to Dharamsala, India, the exiled home of Tibetan grandmother Tsering Dolma Gyaltong, now living in Toronto. During that visit, the Grandmothers were presented to the Dalai Lama who commended their work.

In August, I attended the 6th International Council of 13 Indigenous Grandmothers in Lincoln City, Oregon. The gathering took place in honour of Agnes Baker Pilgrim, considered a living cultural legend of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. Grandmother Agnes has restored the Sacred Salmon Ceremony and there now appears to be more salmon in the river. (Sadly Grandmother Bernadette could not attend this council, as the president of Gabon had died and she was needed in her country.)

Witnessing the combined knowledge of these wisdom keepers, which embodies centuries of ancient teachings, was very moving, as most of these Grandmothers had worked through historical trauma and other trials and hardships. In their home countries, they work with people with AIDS and with those recovering from drug and alcohol addiction and people who are ill. They also mentor youth at risk.

To avoid any kind of hierarchy, the Grandmothers sat at a round table. Approximately 300 people were in attendance, including many young people with children and babies and also many men, which showed a real affirmation of their work. During the week, many significant stories were related, including how when Grandmother Rita, a Yup'ik from Alaska, was nine, her great-grandmother gave her 13 stones and 13 eagle feathers and told her when she was her age she would "sit with a council of elders." At the first meeting, Grandmother Rita gave the others the stones and feathers, saying, "We're late, but we're here."

We are deeply concerned with the unprecedented destruction of our Mother Earth and the destruction of indigenous ways of life.

Elders, water, ancestors and the Earth – these were the celebrated themes at this council. Each day at sunrise, at midday and in the evening, one of the Grandmothers offered her ceremony. Any differences between traditions fell away, as each ceremony blessed the elements of earth, air, fire and water. Afterward, the Grandmother acknowledged the others with great respect.

On the day of honouring water, which Grandmother Agnes calls Earth Mother's blood, it was suggested that those who wanted to bathe in the ocean proceed slowly and rever- *continued p.30...*

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Preserving your tomatoes

ON THE GARDEN PATH Carolyn Herriot

ORGANICS

WARNING: this article will make your mouth water. Every year, I tell myself to cut down on the number of tomato varieties I grow. I still ended up with 35 different varieties this fall and it was a bumper year. You may know I'm an avid seed saver, so I've been busy saving the seeds from multitudes of ripe tomatoes. I hate to waste the tomatoes once the seeds are removed so consequently I've been up to my ears in ripe tomatoes.

As time passed, I decided I needed a system to cope with bowlfuls of tomatoes and I think my system must have worked as I didn't waste any and we now have tomatoes coming out of our ears for winter eating. I thought I'd share what I did with all these tomatoes in case you ever find yourself blessed enough to be in the same predicament.

Separating tomatoes into cherries, salad and paste varieties was the best way to start. I discovered that the smaller cherry tomatoes make great salsa fresca. I simply whirled them in the food processor for a few spins, added the ingredients noted in the recipe below and left the mixture to marinate. I then strained off the liquid and froze in portions perfect for the winter munchies.

The big paste tomatoes got thrown into a large stainless steel saucepan and were slowly cooked down on low heat with no lid, until the water evaporated and all that was left was a thick tomato paste. This was frozen in tubs for use in sauces, casseroles or as a cream of tomato soup base.

Meaty heirloom paste tomatoes make a mean tomato sauce, which involves adding garlic, onions, squash or peppers, a bay leaf, parsley and fresh basil while the tomatoes cook down. This scrummy sauce makes a 10-minute pasta that we adore as a taste of the garden in midwinter.

With salad tomatoes, there's a range of quick options. If they are firm, cut them in half and fill freezer bags with them. I add frozen tomatoes to a range of recipes and I think the fact they are still frozen is the secret for the best success. If you have a dehydrator, dry them and add the flavour of homegrown tomatoes to pizzas, omelettes, salad dressings and dips.

Salsa fresca

1 cup diced tomatoes
1/4 cup finely chopped onion
1 minced garlic clove
1 tsp. minced jalapeno (seeds removed)
3 tbsp. finely chopped fresh cilantro
Juice of 1 lime
Salt & pepper to taste

Bruschetta to die for!

This recipe makes the best Bruschetta topping ever. It's a great way to enjoy freshly harvested tomatoes. (Makes 2 1⁄2 cups.)

Stir together:
4 to 6 finely chopped and seeded plum tomatoes
2 finely sliced green onions

Whisk:
2 tsp. olive oil
2 tsp. lemon juice
1 clove crushed garlic
1⁄2 tsp. salt
Pinch pepper

Add:
2 tbsp. fresh basil, finely chopped
2 tbsp. freshly grated Parmesan

Toss with tomato mixture
Serve on top of toasted baguette

Roasted tomatoes

Tomato flavour is accentuated by slow roasting. For a real treat try this.

(1 to 2 hours roasting time)
Preheat oven to 325°F (150°C)

5 lbs. whole, washed tomatoes
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 tsp. coarse salt
1 tsp. freshly ground pepper
Herbs de Provence (optional)

Place tomatoes in a single layer in a large roasting pan lined with parchment paper. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper and fine herbs as desired.

Put the pan uncovered into the preheated oven for 15 minutes, then turn down the oven to 250°F and continue to roast slowly for 1 to 2 hours until they are reduced in size and lightly browned on top. Let cool for 15 minutes. Add to a multiple of recipes or just eat on a cracker.

Then, of course, there are always all the green leftovers, but it's great to offer mince pies at Christmas from the fruits of your labours in the garden. *Bon appetit!*

(Editor's note: To see all recipes with this article, go to www.commonground.ca/cg220_herriot.shtml)

Carolyn Herriot is author of A Year on the Garden Path: A 52-Week Organic Gardening Guide. *She grows Seeds of Victoria at the Garden Path Centre. www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath*

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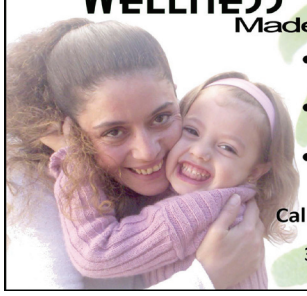
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The hope of a new generation

EARTHFUTURE Guy Dauncey

ENVIRONMENT

OVER THE PAST many years, David Suzuki and I have been doing our best, in our respective columns, to alert you to the immensity of the looming climate crisis. Now, we are just weeks away from the critical conference in Copenhagen where the world's leaders will attempt to reach a new global agreement.

To be honest, I am not hopeful that the result will be close to what is needed. The climate scientists are saying we need to reduce our carbon emissions by 40 percent below the 1990 level by 2020, but only Germany, with one percent of the world's population, has committed to make this happen. Japan has agreed to 25 percent and the European Union as a whole has agreed to 20 percent, but the US is only committing to reduce its emissions back to the 1990 level. Canada is hardly any better, at a theoretical six percent below 1990.

Does this mean we should see the fading colours of the falling leaves as a metaphor for failure, and the inevitable dying of the light? The forecasted rise in global temperature, if we do not cease burning fossil fuels and destroying our planet's rainforests, is up to six degrees Celsius by 2100, bringing an eventual 25-metre sea-level rise, plus no end of chaos from rampant storms, floods, droughts, agricultural failure and ocean marine breakdown. It is the end of civilization. It will also bring such rapid change to Earth's ecosystems that most species will become extinct. There's no comfort to be had here.

What to do? As a planet, we have yet to become truly engaged in the change that is needed. We're still stuck in the tramlines of the 20th century. Our houses, industries, cars, trucks and planes still burn fossil fuels and our governments are still shovelling money to the oil and gas companies because they believe that, without their revenues, there will be no money for hospitals and schools.

However, after three years of work on my new book, *The Climate Challenge: 101 Solutions to Global Warming*, I know what is possible. When you put the solutions together in an integrated, systematic manner, the result is flat-out glorious.

It opens the curtains on a new era of civilization, with clean, green energy that can run forever; farms that can be farmed forever, providing food for all while allowing farmland species to flourish, and forests that can meet all our human needs while preserving 80 percent of their glory for nature. It entices us with neighbourhoods where a real sense of community has been restored, filled with productive food-growing gardens, bicycle trails, artistic creativity and celebrations, all in a contented, efficient and affordable zero-carbon existence.

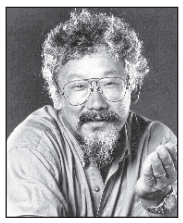
We are still prisoners of the past, awaiting the arrival of a younger generation who will look on the brilliance of this future world that is about to be stolen from their grasp and react with positive and creative rage. They will occupy the streets, block the highways and fill the prisons with their singing, demanding that we either lead the world in a new direction or get out of the way and let others take our place.

We sit on the verge of an amazing transition and if history tells its stories well, nothing will stand in the way of the hopes of a new generation, once they understand what is at stake.

The leaders of the generations that came of age in the 1960s and 70s, who now control the institutions of our world, have seemingly become too entranced by the luxuries that have flowed from prosperity, including lavish salaries, sumptuous houses, exotic holidays and an overabundance of consumer goods to satisfy every desire. Change is uncomfortable and requires effort. What motivation have they to dream of a different world? Better to relax and dream of the golf course, while telling themselves that climate change is either no big deal or a scam dreamed up by environmental groups to fill their impoverished bank accounts.

In reality, we sit on the verge of an amazing transition and if history tells its stories well, nothing will stand in the way of the hopes of a new generation, once they understand what is at stake.

Guy Dauncey's new book, The Climate Challenge: 101 Solutions to Global Warming*, will be* ***launch****ed on Tuesday, Nov 3, 7pm, Vancouver Public Library (Alice MacKay Rm). Guy Dauncey gives a free presentation followed by an introduction by Dr. Mark Jaccard.*



UN climate conference

SCIENCE MATTERS David Suzuki with Faisal Moola

DEVELOPED countries including Canada and the US have benefited tremendously from fossil-fuel exploitation. Resources like oil, gas and coal have allowed us to industrialize and expand our economies, making life easier for citizens.

However, just as developing nations started to follow suit in raising their living standards, we began to realize that our current fuels and technologies come at great cost to the world. And even though developed countries have reaped most of the benefits of fossil fuels, developing countries, which have contributed least to the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, are feeling the brunt of the consequences.

Droughts, severe weather events, food shortages and waves of refugees are just some of the burdens climate change is forcing on people already facing incredible challenges brought on by poverty and a lack of infrastructure for things we take for granted such as clean air, water and food. At the same time, these countries are being told that they can no longer rely on the fossil fuels we have used to bring about prosperity.

In other words, the countries that have been least responsible for global warming are now most affected by its impact. In Canada, our government believes that developing nations need to aim for the same targets we are expected to meet to fight global warming. Even though some of the larger developing nations, like China and India, have overall levels of greenhouse gas emissions that are higher than Canada's, their per capita emissions are a fraction of ours. It's not fair.

World leaders have a great opportunity to correct this imbalance when they meet in Copenhagen, Denmark, from December 7 to 18 to work out an agreement on how best to deal with climate change. Many organizations from around the world are calling on our leaders to sign a fair, ambitious and binding deal.

A fair deal would put much of the onus for reducing emissions that contribute to global warming on the developed nations that are mainly responsible for the problem. Scientists agree that developed countries need to reduce their emissions by at least 40 percent by 2020. Developed countries must also help developing nations with financial and technological support so they can adapt to the worst consequences of climate change, reduce their emissions and benefit from emerging renewable-energy technologies. A fair deal would also compel rich nations to protect poor and marginalized people in developed and developing countries.

The call for an ambitious deal reflects the urgency of the situation. We have already dumped so much heat-trapping carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere that it will take ambitious global efforts to stall the most severe consequences. That means ensuring that global greenhouse gas emissions peak no later than 2017 and then go down quickly so that concentrations in the atmosphere are reduced to less than 350 parts per million.

A fair deal would put the onus for reducing emissions on the developed nations that are mainly responsible for the problem.

An ambitious agreement would also ensure that the world takes advantage of the numerous opportunities to create clean jobs and clean energy, which will strengthen global economies. We must also create conditions that will allow people, plants and animals to survive in a sustainable manner.

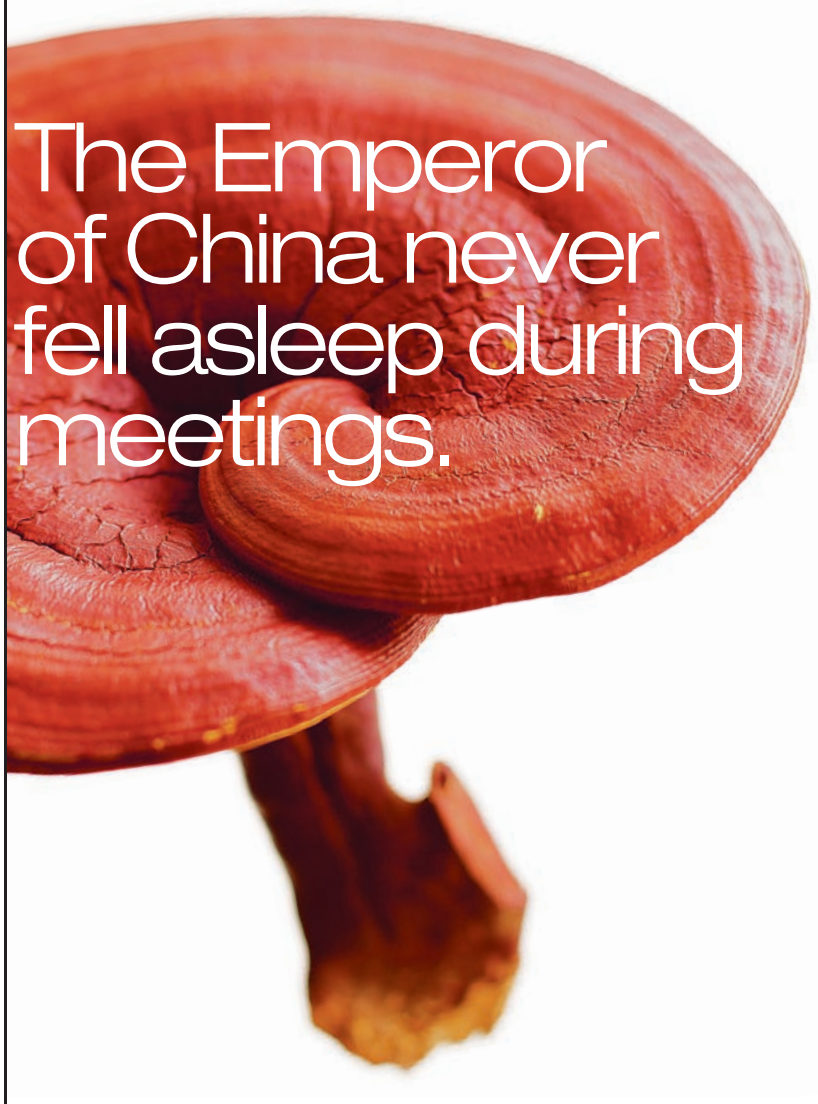
For an agreement to be effective, it must be legally binding, with mechanisms in place to make sure that countries are meeting their obligations and to enforce those obligations.

This all may seem overly ambitious and overly expensive, but the alternative, doing little or nothing, could be catastrophic. Consider also the speed with which countries such as the US were able to come up with trillions of dollars to bail out banking systems that were largely the authors of their own troubles.

The benefits of an agreement in Copenhagen that is fair, ambitious and binding go beyond simply reducing the severity of global warming. Clean-energy technologies, more attention to the plight of the world's poor and recognition of the true value of natural systems and the plants and animals that share this world all provide opportunities to create a sustainable and prosperous world.

There's little time to lose. We must tell our leaders that we expect them to support a fair, ambitious and binding solution in Copenhagen in December. Everyone's future is at stake.

Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org



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INDEPENDENT MEDIA Steve Anderson

CULTURE

IT WAS just over two years ago that, along with a network of organizations and individuals, I launched what would be the first of many public campaigns to keep Canada's media open and democratic.

The "Stop the Big Media Takeover" campaign was focused on the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission's (CRTC) media ownership hearing "Diversity of Voices." The danger was that, despite a slew of big media mergers, the CRTC was poised to weaken cross-ownership and basic media market concentration rules. In the end, the CRTC actually strengthened the rules and agreed to look into funding for community TV.

This appeared to be a victory for people across Canada, however, in reality, the rules did not go far enough to safeguard diversity of voices in local broadcast markets. Nor did it require any divestment on the part of Canadian media companies.

That the CRTC's new rules seemed to be deliberately crafted to avoid challenging the current level of media ownership concentration in Canada was of little surprise. During the CRTC's deliberation over ownership rules, it approved the Canwest Global/Goldman Sachs $2.3-billion takeover of Alliance Atlantis. Clearly, these decisions, coupled with the CRTC's general propensity to favour big industry players over the public interest, are at the heart of the current crisis in traditional media. Recent news of Canwest's insolvency is further evidence of the effects of bad public policy combined with the greed of big media.

On October 6, Canwest filed for Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) protection for some of its operations. Canwest's broadcasting assets, including Global Television, along with the *National Post*, have been awarded court protection from their creditors under the CCAA. The company has missed interest payments to bond holders and is said to have a debt load of nearly $4 billion.

Certainly, big media's profit-first model was bound to lead to a crisis in journalism and media production. But the CRTC could have kept many media workers and consumers safe from big media's race to the bottom had it actually taken serious action to maintain a "diversity of voices."

The Canwest takeover of Alliance Atlantis in 2007 was based on debt and equity financing from Goldman Sachs. Canwest must earn enough profit on its existing media businesses and the AAC specialty channels by 2011 in order to take a controlling equity interest in the merged company. If not, foreign investor Goldman Sachs will own the lion's share of the company. The danger now is that Canwest's debt crisis could be used for a government bailout of some sort, or worse, that policy makers could lift foreign ownership rules in order to keep Canwest afloat.

Lifting foreign ownership rules will surely make a bad situation worse. Instead of having to deal with an unaccountable Canadian big media conglomerate, we'll have an international big media conglomerate with even *less* democratic responsibility.

The good news is that journalism and media production in general are not unsustainable; it's the big media model that is unsustainable. In looking at Canwest's job losses, the blame can be placed squarely on corporate mismanagement. The question is who is going to fill the vacuum where big media once was?

The crisis in the traditional media industry, combined with the proliferation of the most open medium in history, the Internet, has produced an historic opportunity to make media and journalism serve our communities once again. We should seize this opportunity before the same big media that got us into this crisis have the opportunity to re-establish their concentration of journalism and media resources.

Now, more than ever, we need to support independent, community and public media so they can step into the void left by big media. We need creative and independent experiments with both journalism practice and finance.

On November 7, Vancouverites will discuss how to make a new media system at the Media Democracy Day event. Visit www.mediademocracyday.org/vancouver

***Steve Anderson** is the national coordinator for the Campaign for Democratic Media. He has written* for The Tyee, Toronto Star, Epoch Times *and* Adbusters.

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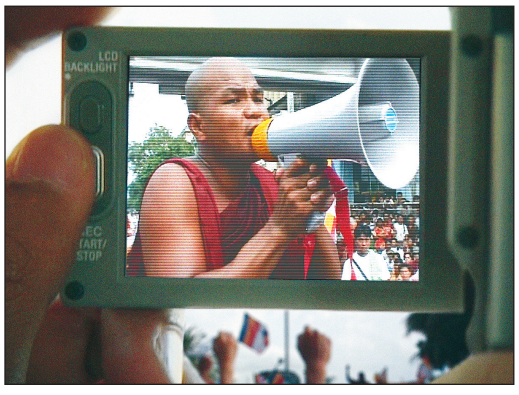

The images flow in *Burma VJ*

Burma documented by VJs

FILMS WORTH WATCHING Robert Alstead

A highlight of last month's Vancouver International Film Festival was the potent little documentary *Burma VJ* (www.burmavjmovie.com). The good news for those who missed it is that it's showing again at the Amnesty International Film Festival (November 12-15, Vancity Theatre).

The reality of news reporting in Burma is that there isn't any. Or, at least, there wouldn't be if it weren't for the few resourceful video journalists, or VJs, who risk life and limb to capture images of rare acts of dissent against one of the world's most oppressive regimes. Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been imprisoned in her house since 1989. Foreign journalists are not allowed in. The media is the enemy. Anyone with a camera is arrested, and, as footage shows, can be shot dead on the spot.

In August and September, Burma made headlines as popular protests swelled into huge marches led by Buddhist monks. The VJs kept the images flowing via satellite and other means to international news agencies and to us at home, even as the uprising was brutally suppressed.

It's quite astonishing that a film that comprises so much footage can have such impact; it was caught on palm-sized, consumer camcorders, often shot with a handheld, sometimes with the lens poking out of a bag with bits of clothing getting in the shot. There's a sense of being there. At first, fear permeates everything. Our VJ, codename Joshua, says he fears being spotted filming by the ubiquitous secret police. People on the bus fear talking about "the generals" on camera. But one act of defiance leads to another, the vice grip of fear loosens and before long, the streets are erupting. There are moments of pure elation in this film as monks, students and people march chanting, "Our cause! Our cause!" defying the multiplying ranks of gun and bat-toting soldiers and police. It swells the heart. Credit to director Anders Østergaard and his team for crafting this film so well. For instance, the few reconstructions are perfectly understated and work seamlessly into the story.

Festival opener, *The Yes Men Fix the World,* also goes undercover, with serial corporate pranksters *Yes Men's* Mike and Andy performing their hilarious high profile spoofs. Remember when Dow Chemical accepted full responsibility for the Bhopal chemical disaster on BBC television? Or when ExxonMobil and National Petroleum Council (NPC) launched Vivoleum at GO-EXPO, Canada's largest oil conference? Delegates were told how human fat-based Vivoleum will make up for a shortage of the black stuff and burned little vivoleum candles at their tables. It's amazing what they get away with.

Another to look out for is Elizabeth Farnsworth and Patricio Lanfranco's *The Judge and the General* in which a judge from the Pinochet era examines the murderous legacy of the Chilean dictator and his own complicity in the tragedy.

Docs ruled at VIFF with the most popular citation going to Bill Guttentag's *Soundtrack for a Revolution*, focusing on the music that powered the American civil rights movement. Dan Stone's Sea Shepherd doc *At the Edge of the World* (see September FWW) won the VIFF Environmental Film Audience Award. *Common Ground* sponsored it. People also really liked *65_RedRoses* about the struggle of one cystic fibrosis sufferer to get the lung transplant operation she needs to survive.

Brit climate change documentary *The Age of Stupid* is now rolling out at many unusual venues across Canada. The film is as good as the trailer suggests with plenty of fun animation, snappy effects and, importantly, a good sense of humour to leaven the seriousness of the message. It should have broad appeal and if the Vancouver premiere is anything to go by, it could help stir things up in the run up to the Earth Summit in Copenhagen in December.

Robert Alstead is blogging VIFF at www.iofilm.com

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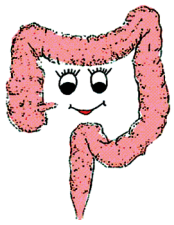

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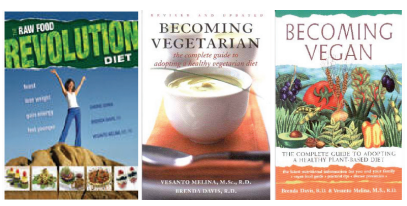

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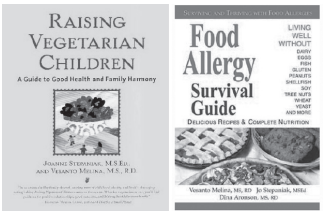

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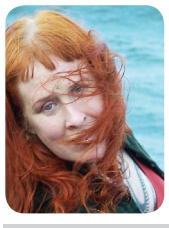

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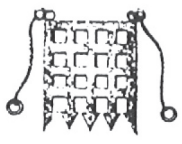

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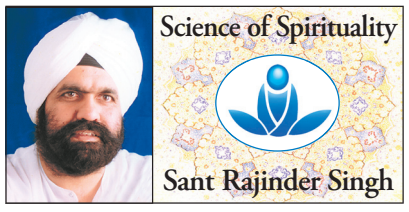

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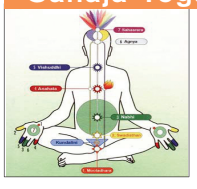

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...Compassion - from p.4

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About Karen Armstrong

Karen Armstrong is one of the most provocative, original thinkers on the role of religion in the modern world. Armstrong is a former Roman Catholic nun who left a British convent to pursue a degree in modern literature at Oxford. She has written more than 20 books around the ideas of what Islam, Judaism and Christianity have in common, and around their effect on world events, including the magisterial *A History of God and Holy War: The Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World*. Her latest book is *The Case for God*. Her Her meditations on personal faith and religion (she calls herself a freelance monotheist) spark discussion, especially her take on fundamentalism, which she sees in a historical context as an outgrowth of modern culture.

In February of 2008, Karen Armstrong won the TED Prize and wished for help in creating, launching and propagating the Charter for Compassion.

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The Institute's work rests on a deep conviction that each of us has the power to transform the world by strengthening the connection between the inner life of mind and spirit with the outer life of service and action. While the Fetzer Institute is not a religious organization, it honors and learns from a variety of spiritual traditions.

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TED stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design. It is an annual conference, which brings together the world's most fascinating thinkers and doers, who are challenged to give the talk of their lives (in 18 minutes). TED.com makes the best talks and performances, the ideas worth spreading, from TED available to the public, for free. The TED Prize is designed to leverage the TED Community's exceptional array of talent and resources. It is awarded annually to three exceptional individuals who each receive $100,000 and, much more important, the granting of "One Wish to Change the World."

...One Life, One Tribe - from p.18

ently rather than rushing in. After the ceremony, the shore was lined with people prayerfully entering the ocean, surrounded by flower offerings reminiscent of Balinese ceremonies.

The Grandmothers are speaking to us loudly and clearly, through words, prayer and action. They are offering their teachings and plant medicines for others to respectfully use for healing and they entreat us to connect with nature and find our own personal gifts to offer the world. In these difficult times, with the Grandmothers leading the way, we now have the opportunity to truly become one tribe.

The 7th Council gathering takes place Dec. 3-7, 2009, in Sedona, Arizona. For more information about the Grandmothers: www.grandmotherscouncil.com

Info for the film For the Next 7 Generations*: www.forthenext7generations.com*

Books: Grandmothers Counsel the World *by Carol Schaeffer*

...Tolle - from p.14

plants, no matter how beautiful, is only a pale reflection? Can human beings lose the density of their conditioned mind structures and become like crystals or precious stones, so to speak, transparent to the light of consciousness? Can they defy the gravitational pull of materialism and materiality and rise above identification with form that keeps the ego in place and condemns them to imprisonment within their own personality?

The possibility of such a transformation has been the central message of the great wisdom teachings of humankind. The messengers – Buddha, Jesus and others, not all of them known – were humanity's early flowers. They were precursors, rare and precious beings. A widespread flowering was not yet possible at that time and their message became largely misunderstood and often greatly distorted. It certainly did not transform human behavior, except in a small minority of people.

Is humanity more ready now than at the time of those early teachers? Why should this be so? What can you do, if anything, to bring about or accelerate this inner shift? What is it that characterizes the old egoic state of consciousness, and by what signs is the new emerging consciousness recognized? These and other essential questions will be addressed in this book. More important, this book itself is a transformational device that has come out of the arising new consciousness. The ideas and concepts presented here may be important, but they are secondary. They are no more than signposts pointing toward awakening. As you read, a shift takes place within you.

This book's main purpose is not to add new information or beliefs to your mind or to try to convince you of anything, but to bring about a shift in consciousness, that is to say, to awaken. In that sense, this book is not "interesting." Interesting means you can keep your distance, play around with ideas and concepts in your mind, agree or disagree. This book is about you. It will change your state of consciousness or it will be meaningless. It can only awaken those who are ready. Not everyone is ready yet, but many are, and with each person who awakens, the momentum in the collective consciousness grows and it becomes easier for others. If you don't know what awakening means, read on. Only by awakening can you know the true meaning of that word. A glimpse is enough to initiate the awakening process, which is irreversible. For some, that glimpse will come while reading this book. For many others who may not even have realized it, the process has already begun. This book will help them recognize it. For some, it may have begun through loss or suffering; for others, through coming into contact with a spiritual teacher or teaching, through reading *The Power of Now* or some other spiritually alive and therefore transformational book – or any combination of the above. If the awakening process has begun in you, the reading of this book will accelerate and intensify it.

An essential part of the awakening is the recognition of the unawakened you, the ego as it thinks, speaks and acts, as well as the recognition of the collectively conditioned mental processes that perpetuate the unawakened state.

That is why this book shows the main aspects of the ego and how they operate in the individual as well as in the collective. This is important for two related reasons: the first is that unless you know the basic mechanics behind the workings of the ego, you won't recognize it and it will trick you into identifying with it again and again. This means it takes you over, an imposter pretending to be you. The second reason is that the act of recognition itself is one of the ways in which awakening happens. When you recognize the unconsciousness in you, that which makes the recognition possible *is* the arising consciousness, *is* awakening. You cannot fight against the ego and win, just as you cannot fight against darkness. The light of consciousness is all that is necessary. You are that light.

Excerpted from A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose *by Eckhart Tolle. Reprinted by arrangement with Dutton, a member of Penguin Group (USA), Inc. Copyright (c) Eckhart Tolle, 2005.*

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...Olson - from p.13

word spread that delegates would leave Seattle without agreeing on an agenda for future trade talks. "The scene… resembled a New Year's Eve party: People banged on drums, blew horns and tossed flying discs through the air. One landed at the foot of a police officer, who threw it back to the crowd amid cheers."

The creative possibilities undoubtedly attracted thousands more protestors to the streets of Seattle, the kind of folks who weren't disposed to locking themselves together at intersections or smashing windows with crowbars. Their immense numbers tipped the balance in favour of the Direct Action Network's goal of shutting down the WTO and fixing The Battle of Seattle in the history books.

By Wednesday, the second day of the protests, the Seattle police forces were augmented by more than 500 state and regional police, plus several hundred National Guard. The additional forces brought in from outside Seattle were less cautious about making distinctions between curious locals, nonviolent protestors and any remaining anarchists. Six hundred people were arrested in the days that followed, as the police action escalated into increasingly aggressive attacks on people in the streets. For two days, hundreds of protestors held vigil outside the Public Safety Building, singing and chanting and demanding the release of hundreds of fellow protesters. Nearly all the protesters were released by Sunday on their personal recognizance. In January, all of the mass arrest cases were dismissed because the overwhelmed Seattle police had failed to fill out arrest forms.

The city of Seattle went $3 million over their estimated budget of $6 million for hosting the conference. In part, the excess was attributed to city clean-up and overtime billing by police. The damage to commercial businesses from vandalism and lost sales was estimated at $20 million.

On Wednesday morning, I revisited the momentarily calm streets. Several city blocks looked like someone had picked them up and dropped them from a three-foot height. Repairs were already underway to broken windows and graffiti-covered columns. (Who said the WTO doesn't create work?)

Paul de Armond summed up the strategic dimension to the WTO protests: "The Direct Action Network strategy of nonviolent civil disobedience had succeeded against the black bloc's efforts to escalate the police violence, the AFL-CIO's strategy of controlling and marginalizing protests in favour of a symbolic parade, the attempts of the Seattle police to clear the streets with tear gas, and media efforts to frame the issue in terms of 'violent protesters.'"

The Millennium round of trade talks collapsed in Seattle and the WTO meeting in Cancun, Mexico, fell apart in 2003 because of farmer-led protests. Although the Battle in Seattle wasn't directly responsible for the successive failure of the North-South agreement on trade policies, it definitely brought the world's consciousness to bear on the interrelated issues of human rights, labour demands and health and environmental protection. This extraordinary experiment in democratic dissent also created a template for later protests in Quebec City, Genoa and beyond. Mainstream media, for the first time, had to seriously address the issues behind the agitation. An immense upwelling of people power was beginning across the planet, rejecting the top-down model of transcorporate rule.

Then came 9/11. The 'day that changed everything' certainly changed the antiglobalization movement, sucking an enormous amount of energy out of a shaky coalition of common interests. Suddenly, the threat of "terrorism' could be conjured by the media at the slightest hint of social unrest. In the post-9/11 mass protests across North America and Europe, law enforcement began to take a more pre-emptive and punitive approach, including new methods of crowd control, such as constitutionally and charter-of-rights bogus "Free Speech Zones." In a post-9/11 culture of hi-tech surveillance, your freedoms are respected only to the point you exercise them.

Ten years ago this month, men and women, young and old, rich and poor – from farmers and machinists to young university students and loggers – marched in step, chanting, "This is what democracy looks like." A window opened, briefly, to a more sane and sustainable future. There was a dizzying glimpse, just before the window came down. But it didn't shut all the way. The hinges have been loose ever since that epochal week in the Pacific Northwest.

Were it not for the antiglobalization movement's visibility in Seattle, it's unlikely that mainstream North America would have today's level of awareness about genetically modified foods, environmental toxins, species decline and global wealth disparities. Once-fringe ideas about "bioregionalism" – such as community-supported agriculture, sustainable energy production and civic limits on plastic products – are becoming policy realities in communities across the world.

Since November of 1999, millions of people around the world have been alerted to a new landscape beckoning beyond the battered window frame. At present, this landscape is somewhere between a mirage and a miracle-in-the-making. It's a vision of people doing what is necessary to survive as a species, by choosing doubt over dogma, education over ignorance, health over wealth, ecology over economy, wisdom over cleverness, compassion over confrontation and love over fear. This is what democracy could look like.

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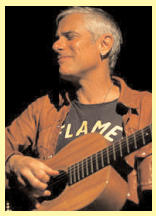

THURS., NOV. 19
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NOV 2 & DEC 2
Meditation for Planetary Peace on the Full Moon at 7:30 PM on Monday, November 2nd and Wednesday, December 2nd. 2950 Laurel St, Vancouver. www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver.htm

NOV 3
Silva Method Free Introductory Vancouver 7pm, UBC Robson Square. We teach the 'How To' behind the Secret since 50 years. Unleash your mind. www.silvamethod-canada.com

NOV 6
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30pm, $10; Course $325. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. www.pacificreflexology.com

H1N1 - An evening with Dr. Terry Willard, one of North America's leading herbalists. 7-9pm Center for Peace, 1825 West 16th Ave., Vancouver. Sponsored by Trophic and Wild Rose.

NOV 6-8
Thetahealing Basic course. Learn to create attainable miracles in your life. Live life on YOUR terms. www.greenthumbhealing.com 604-715-0739.

NOV 10
Get Connected. It's Only Natural. FREE Professional Development. Natural Health Practitioners of Canada- Connections Café. Discussing provincial, national and international advances in natural healthcare. 7-9pm. The Listel Hotel, 1300 Robson Street, Vancouver, BC. Register: www.nhpcanada.org

NOV 10, 14, 16, 19, 21
Silva Method Hands On Workshop: Think Out Of The Box. Free Yourself, Unleash Intuition, Creativity, Self Efficacy. Develop Mental Focus, Relief from Stress anxiety and self-sabotage. www.silvamethod-canada.com

NOV 12
Turn your Clutter into Cash with Paul Talbot, 7-9pm (reg.6.30pm) $20.00 p/p, Holiday Inn on Howe St., Info: 604-684-5059.

NOV 14
Elderspeak – Town Hall Wisdom Sharing Circle: Sat. November14, 7pm. Featuring Frank Setee, Cree/Ojibwae/Lakota Medicine Way Spiritual Elder. At Vancouver Multi-Cultural Society, 1254 W. 7th, Kits. Presented by Earthsong Healing Circles. www.shamanichealing.info 604-418-9636. By Donation.

Malalai Joya, Afghan Member of Parliament and author of the new book "A Woman Among Warlords: The Extraordinary Story of An Afghan Who Dared to Speak Out." In person, Saturday 7pm, St Andrew's Wesley Church, 1022 Nelson at Burrard. Suggested donation $10. (no-one turned away). Organized by StopWar.ca.

NOV 14-15
Travel Alberta: Canmore Lifefest – Packages 1-4 nights until Nov. 30. Includes massage, yoga, dinner theatre, & discounts. Info: 866-226-6673, ext. 1. www.bestofcanmore.com

NOV 15
Raw Food Chef Certification! Our fundamental course teaches how to go raw and make delicious meals fast, easy & fun! 8-course meal served! 2-6pm $150. Call: 778-839-8424. www.rawfoundation.ca

NOV 20-22
Massage classes "Fusion Works" = combination of Hot stones, Thai and Balinese. R.M.Ts receive 24 credits. 1-866-537-1219 www.academyofmassage.ca.

Fraser Valley Health & Wellness Show. Showcasing holistic products and practitioners to support conscious living. info@fvhealthshow.com 604-793-7086. www.fvhealthshow.com

NOV 20-22
East Side Culture Crawl 3 days 300 artists. Open studios for everyone to explore in Vancouver's East Side. www.eastsideculturecrawl.com

NOV 20-23
Mastery of Deep Trance States Four-day Seminar: Access Personal & Professional transformation, NLP, Hypnosis, Bio-energy. Vancouver, 604-421-1722. hnichols@shaw.ca www.deeptrancestates.com

NOV 25-29
Core Belief Engineering five-day Basic Course. Mind expanding personal transformation; first step of Practitioner Certification. White Rock 604-536-7402. www.corebelief.ca info@corebelief.ca

NOV 27-DEC 3
Screening of "The Cove" Director Louie Psihoyos' documentary about a group of activists who expose an annual mass slaughter of dolphins in Japan. Double billed with **"Food Inc"** a study of America's food industry. Hollywood Threatre. 3123 W. Broadway. 604-738-3211 www.hollywoodtheatre.ca

NOV 28 & 29
Last RAW Food Instructor Certification- of the year! Extensive gourmet meals, sprouting, dehydrating, coaching. Opportunity to teach, have own business & website. 2 days, 11am-7pm SAVE $100 reg by NOV 5 $695+ GST Prereq: L1- Raw Food Chef Certification (Nov 15) www.rawfoundation.ca

NOV 28-DEC 6
"The Life Changing Workshop" Experience the most comprehensive life-changing workshop on transforming consciousness with the internationally renowned Dr. Vernon Woolf - Founder of 'Holodynamics'. (See inside back cover ad.)

NOV 29
Benjamin Creme, author and esotericist talks about the emergence of Maitreya, the World Teacher. Video presentations 3PM, Sunday, November 1 & 29, YWCA Hotel, 733 Beatty, CANFOR Room.

DEC 5
Youth Healers International empowering youth to heal themselves. Information and visioning meeting. 2pm, Saturday December 5. Dandelion Centre, 175 E. Broadway at Main. 604-506-7074.

DEC 11
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7.30pm, $10; Course $325. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. www.pacificreflexology.com

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SATURDAYS

Crystal Meditations & Healing Circles 3rd Saturday/month, 7-9pm Fort Langley, B.C. Vancouver location coming soon! www.crystalzaba.webs.com

SUNDAYS

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Centre for Spiritual Living: Join us every Sunday @ 11 AM for spiritual teachings and great music at 1495 West 8th Ave, Vancouver. Info: 604-321-1225, www.cslvancouver.com

SOS (Science of Spirituality): See Resource Directory listing in Spiritual Practices for schedule in Richmond, Vancouver & Victoria. 604-277-1247. All Welcome. www.sos.org

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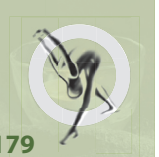

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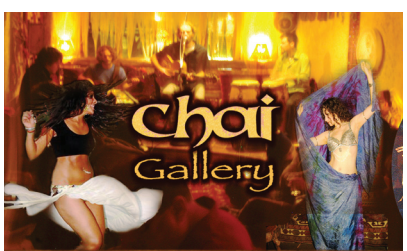

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TUESDAYS

Reflexology Student Clinic 6–10pm. One hour sessions $18. By appointment only. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. www.pacificreflexology.com

WEDNESDAYS

Hawaiian Medicine Circle 7pm Hawaiian guided meditation, Sharing the Aloha, tea and snacks. $10 donation. At Hale Ola, 1215 Madison Avenue, Burnaby. 604-431-7474 Call Kamu Kaimana.

Introduction to Meditation and Positive Living. Free Program Every Wed @ 7pm, YWCA, Skills Plus Room, 535 Hornby Street, 604-317-2747, www.santmat.net

FRIDAYS

"Destiny Dialogues" Free Talks First Friday of each month, experiential evening that explores the inter-connections between destiny and suffering, relationships, vocations, joy, teachers, character, nature, family, dreams. 7-9pm. 604-317-1613.

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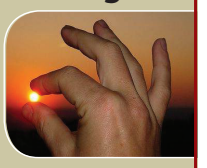

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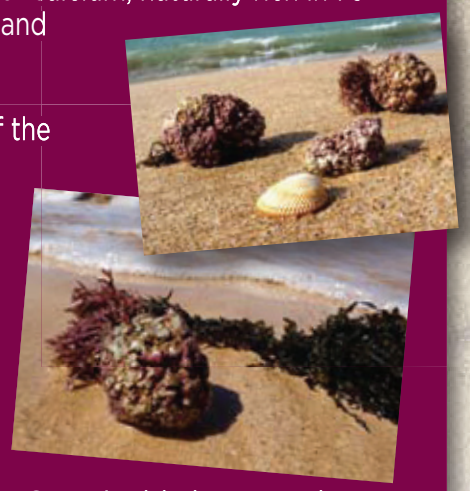

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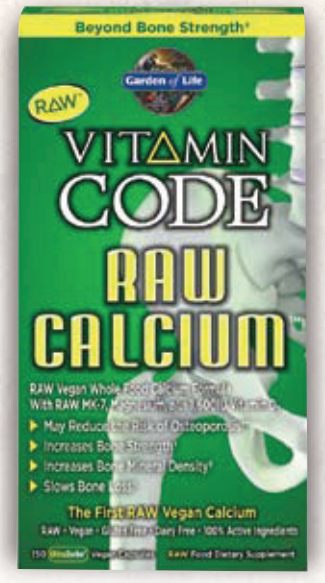

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- Gluten Free, Dairy Free, No Soy Allergens
- No Binders or Fillers
- Live Probiotics & Enzymes
- Contains 22 RAW & Organically Grown Fruits and Vegetables

AlgaeCal RAW Clinical Strength

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Garden of Life®

††Adequate Calcium and Vitamin D as part of a healthful diet, along with physical activity, may reduce the risk of osteoporosis later in life.

This product is for normal age related bone-loss, it is not intended to treat Osteopenia or Osteoporosis.

On Track Zodiac

NOVEMBER 2009 Adrien Dilon

ARIES (Mar 21 – Apr 19)
If you find you have to make excuses for your conduct, perhaps you have some underlying guilt. You are perhaps now coming to terms with the fact that you feel responsible for others and contrition rides like a ribbon through your communication.

TAURUS (Apr 20 – May 21)
The full moon now glowing opposite your sun is the Beaver Moon. Traditionally, at this time on the land, many endeavours would be made to ensure warmth for the winter ahead. Make bold efforts to plan, build and create what gives you comfort in the weeks ahead.

GEMINI (May 22 – Jun 20)
In the recent past, you stayed within your shell. Now, you can expect great social times ahead. You are ready to branch out once again. This is a time of amusement, pleasure, gatherings and all in all, a most agreeable period.

CANCER (Jun 21 – Jul 22)
Dramas, sad movies and actors' onscreen conduct allow us to share in the experience remotely. You might need to decide if you are an active participant in your own exciting life or if you will continue to remain a watcher, living constantly in your head.

LEO (Jul 23 – Aug 22)
If you were now to receive information about a particular series of events, you wouldn't believe it. Many of us aren't always shown the way and we stumble upon it ourselves, saying, "Oh, now I get it!" Realization comes to those who don't wait.

VIRGO (Aug 23 – Sep 22)
"It's not time to make a change; just relax, take it easy… there's so much you have to know." In the words of Cat Stevens, take heed. Preparedness equals readiness. Ponder more and await the opening gate. You will walk through easily when you are ripe for something distinctly different.

LIBRA (Sep 23 – Oct 22)
If you don't feel as sharp with as much as your usual mental prowess, at least release any inner turmoil you may feel and go for a less aggressive and more passive approach. Receptivity and a cup of tea are great ways to indulge your fantasy life.

SCORPIO (Oct 23 – Nov 21)
You may put others on a pedestal and believe that you are not worthy of attention or the spotlight. Illusion is a trap we fall into when we discover our utmost power has seemingly betrayed us. The Frosty Moon will intensify your feelings so best utilize this time to heal.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
Most likely, you are finding it difficult to relate well with others as you are re-evaluating what you have put into the mix and what you receive from it. You have come to know yourself in a deeper way and perhaps become more detached.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
It is possible you have widened your social path too much while overextending yourself and your generous nature. You might stay closer to home and pay attention to those nearer to you. We often reach out further than necessary to avoid being there for those who need us most.

AQUARIUS (Jan 20 – Feb 19)
Even if you feel the whole world is against you, it can all be dissolved with the idea that you are complete and resolute. You might find you have to deliver much more than usual now. Stick to your guns, in a manner fitting symbolically. Unique people have more difficulty with the mundane.

PISCES (Feb 20 – Mar 20)
New hope arises within you along with the idea that all is not lost. You have wondered about pain and the randomness of suffering. With your depth of character, you may not wish to talk about trivial things, yet it might provide a muse for your sagacity and paradoxical awareness.

Adrien Dilon is a clairvoyant consultant and author with 34 years experience in astrology, art and healing, adrien.dilon@gmail.com / members.shaw.ca/Adrien.dilon.

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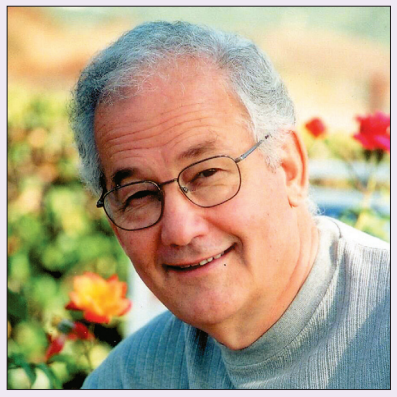
- create health and wellness and live addiction free
- manifest financial abundance and become principle-driven
- fill your life with purpose and happiness
- move from belief and faith to knowing and being
- transform collective consciousness
- potentialize systems



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~ Darylle Dennis, head of 7 Steps, Inc.

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